

Special Borough Council Meeting

June 29, 2020

A Special Meeting of Souderton Borough Council was called to order, on the above date, at 7:00 pm by Council President Brian Goshow with the following members present:

President Brian K. Goshow	Councillor Matthew Mscichowski
Vice-President Julie Munden	Councillor Daryl Littlefield
Councillor Donna Rogers	Councillor Edward Huber
Councillor Richard Godshall	Borough Manager P. Michael Coll
Councillor Daniel Yocum	Police Chief James P. Leary

Absent from this meeting was Mayor John Reynolds, Borough Councillor Ned Leight and Borough Solicitor Charlotte Hunsberger.

Borough Council reviewed and discussed the Souderton Business Improvement District Preliminary Plan for Re-Authorization, as last revised March 13, 2020. Souderton BID representatives Margaret Zglinicki and Harry Boardman were in attendance. Borough Council discussed the required process and timeframe for authorization and reached a consensus to formally authorize the advertisement and circulation of the BID Preliminary Plan for Re-Authorization at the July 6, 2020 regular Borough Council meeting. Souderton BID will then be required to circulate the plan to the respective property owners, conduct the required public hearings and receive the final votes from the property owners within the BID Re-Authorization Plan.

Outdoor Dining was further discussed by Borough Council. Borough Council agreed that a formal Resolution should be prepared to temporarily waive certain provisions of the Outdoor Dining Ordinance to help local businesses cope with the COVID-19 related restrictions. The temporary waiver should run through 2020 and will then be reconsidered if necessary.

Councillor Edward Huber reported on the recent progress of the special swimming pool committee concerning the potential opening of the pool. The committee members discussed challenges with memberships, controlling occupancy, replacing key management positions and implementing COVID-19 guidelines. Following much discussion Borough Council concluded that opening the pool in 2020 will not be possible. The management, staffing and COVID-19 requirements are too much to overcome in the limited time we have to open the facility this summer. Borough Council discussed the need to continue to fill the key pool management positions in preparation for the 2021 season. A new management team will need to be in place by the end of this year to properly plan and prepare for the 2021 season.

Borough Manager Michael Coll reviewed various improvements associated with the Community Park, pavilion and band shell. Trout Brothers is forming the concrete cap for the top of the stone wall, which will include provisions for accent lighting. Bergey's Electric is working on lighting upgrades within the band shell. We continue to evaluate the suggestion to install metal frame work to hang speakers on either side of the band shell, but concern has been expressed with preserving the iconic appearance of the band shell and its arch. Borough Manager

Michael Coll further discussed a plan to utilize the proposed raised monument, which will display a plaque dedicating the concert lawn area in name of Marcus Rosenberger, to also house electric and sound controls for the concerts. Some concern was expressed about covering this area with the sound controls during the concerts, but it would be an ideal location for the sound controls to be located. Council President Brian Goshow suggested that he will contact Rotary and the Park Improvement Committee to have a meeting to discuss the various upgrades and proposed improvements.

The Souderton Planning Commission has been considering resumption of regular meetings that have been postponed due to the COVID-19 emergency and restrictions. The Montgomery County Planning Commission continues to prefer their planners to participate virtually rather than in-person. Over the past several months, the Borough Engineer and Montgomery County Planning Commission have been reviewing the development plans for the remainder of the Berkeley Court development. Review letters have been forwarded to the developer's engineer. Work will continue to resolve the engineering issues associated with the base plan. The developer must begin addressing the required site amenities prior to the next Planning Commission meeting. The Borough Manager did note that PennDOT is requiring the developer to upgrade and signalize the Route 309 southbound off ramp to Route 113 in Hilltown Township as a condition of their HOP permit. Frustration was expressed over the expenditure of funds to correct an existing condition in Hilltown Township created by prior commercial developments within the township. The burden of this PennDOT mandate will take available funds from the Souderton Borough project.

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported that the Zoning Hearing Board is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, August 11, 2020 to consider two applications. The first application is a simple car port to the side of a dwelling at 40 N. Fifth Street. The second application is for the new Broad Street Pizza restaurant on W. Broad Street. They are proposing to install awnings on the front façade connecting to a marquee sign. The Planning Commission previously reviewed this proposal and questioned the size and scale of the marquee sign. As an alternative the Planning Commission suggested maintaining the awning and marquee roof over the main entrance with a smaller projecting sign beneath. Borough Council discussed concern over the size of the proposed marquee sign, but suggested that a reduced marquee sign might be acceptable. The matter will be referred to the Planning Commission for comment prior to the scheduled Zoning Hearing date.

The Borough Manager noted a few items that have been deferred due to the COVID-19 emergency. Borough Council will further discuss the appointment to the Civil Service Commission in July, anticipating a formal recommendation for appointment at the August Borough Council Meeting. Borough Council discussed and recommended the installation of a 4 way stop restriction at the intersection of Wile Avenue and W. Summit Street. Formal consideration will be made at the July 6, 2020 Borough Council meeting.

Councillor Julie Munden discussed options and possible considerations to record traditional live Borough Council meetings and methods to allow residents to still access the meetings virtually to make comment. Further consideration and discussion is needed. Councillor

Munden also reported that the newsletter project for the Souderton Area community is moving forward, with a target to have the first newsletter go out in the spring of 2021.

Councillor Edward Huber attended a recent meeting on the status of the Route 309 Connector project. The COVID-19 restrictions have delayed the completion of property and right of way acquisitions. A few properties remain unsettled and may need to be resolved through the courts, which have been closed due to the COVID pandemic. Councillor Huber specifically requested copies of the proposed detour plans for the project to understand any impact to Souderton Borough. The second phase of this project is still slated to begin in the spring of 2021, which will take the route to the Souderton-Hatfield Pike. The third phase does not have any specific timeline for construction. Borough Council discussed the negative impact on Souderton Borough without the completion of the third phase.

There being no further business, the special meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

P. Michael Coll
Borough Secretary